

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-04

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 PCH-03 CIAE-00 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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S/S - FVORTIZ

----- 120535

P R 082339Z APR 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY RABAT PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TUNIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY VALLETTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

INFO USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

SECDEF

JCS

CNO

CINCEUR

CINCUSNAVEUR

CINCLANTFLT

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT BY POUCH

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CINCEUR AND CINCUSNAVEUR ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, MNUC

SUBJ: NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP (NPW) VISITS TO THE
MEDETERANEAN

REF: A. STATE 294701 (DTG 132223Z DEC 75) (NOTAL)
B. MADRID 2484 (DTG 311412Z MARCH 76) (NOTAL)

1. REFTEL A SAID THE NUCLEAR POWERED AIRCRAFT CARRIER
USS NIMITZ (CVN-68) AND THE NUCLEAR POWERED GUIDED
MISSILE CRUISERS USS CALIFORNIA (CGN-36) AND USS SOUTH
CAROLINA (CGN-37) WILL BEGIN A SIX MONTH DEPLOYMENT TO
THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA AS COMPONENTS OF THE US SIXTH
FLEET IN JULY, AND NOTED THAT THIS WOULD MARK THE FIRST
DEPLOYMENT OF US NUCLEAR POWERED SURFACE SHIPS TO THE
MED SINCE 1964. THE NUCLEAR POWERED ATTACK SUBMARINE
USS BILLFISH (SSN-676) WILL ALSO BE INCLUDED IN THE TASK
GROUP. THE FOUR SHIPS OF THE TASK GROUP WILL EACH REQUIRE
APPROXIMATELY NINETY DAYS IN PORT DURING THEIR DEPLOYMENT
TO MEET NORMAL SHIP LIBERTY AND UPKEEP REQUIREMENTS.

2. AS THE DATE OF THE PLANNED DEPLOYMENT DRAWS NEARER,
THE LACK OF SUBSTANTIVE PROGRESS IN OBTAINING ADEQUATE
PORT ACCESS FOR THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP HAS
BECOME OF INCREASINGLY SERIOUS CONCERN. THE FOLLOWING
OUTLINE PROVIDES AN OVERVIEW OF THE PROBLEM BY REVIEWING

THE CURRENT STATUS OF NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP ACCESS TO
THE PORTS OF THE MEDITERRANEAN LITTORAL BY COUNTRY:

A. ALGERIA. THE CURRENT STANCE OF THE GOVERNMENT OF
ALGERIA RESPECTING THE RESOLUTION OF THE SPANISH SAHARA
SITUATION PRECLUDES CONSIDERATION OF ANY US WARSHIP
VISITS TO ALGERIAN PORTS AT THIS TIME.

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B. EGYPT. US NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS HAVE NEVER BEEN
GRANTED ACCESS TO EGYPTIAN PORTS. WHILE WE BELIEVE IT MAY
BE PREMATURE TO SEEK APPROVAL FOR NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP
VISITS AT THIS TIME, IF A PATTERN OF ROUTINE CONVENTIONAL
POWERED WARSHIP VISITS TO EGYPT IS ESTABLISHED, LIMITED
NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP ACCESS MAY BE FEASIBLE. EMBASSY
CAIRO COMMENTS WELCOMED.

C. FRANCE. ACCESS TO FRENCH PORTS FOR US NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS WAS TERMINATED IN 1969 AND HAS BEEN SUSPENDED SINCE THAT DATE. ALTHOUGH A MAJOR EFFORT IS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY TO REGAIN ACCESS TO FRENCH PORTS ON A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE BASIS, THERE IS NO ASSURANCE THAT THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED CAN BE RESOLVED DURING THE PERIOD OF THE PLANNED DEPLOYMENT OF THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP.

D. GIBRALTAR. US CONVENTIONALLY POWERED WARSHIPS REGULARLY AND ROUTINELY VISIT GIBRALTAR. HOWEVER, BECAUSE OF SPANISH SENSITIVITIES, AND IN LIGHT OF THE RENEGOTIATION OF THE US-SPANISH AGREEMENT OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION, NPW VISITS TO GIBRALTAR HAVE BEEN HELD IN ABEYANCE SINCE APRIL 1974. GIVEN CONTINUING UK APPROVAL FOR SUCH VISITS AND THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEW TREATY WITH SPAIN, RESUMPTION OF NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS TO GIBRALTAR MAY BE POSSIBLE.

E. GREECE. THE GOVERNMENT OF GREECE HAS HISTORICALLY NOT DIFFERENTIATED BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS. HOWEVER, GREEK PORTS WERE CLOSED TO ALL US WARSHIPS IN REACTION TO THE CYPRUS CRISIS, AND CONVENTIONAL POWERED WARSHIP VISITING HAS ONLY RECENTLY BEEN RESUMED. REQUESTS FOR NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS HAVE THEREFORE BEEN HELD IN ABEYANCE PENDING FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IN THE GENERAL US SHIP VISITING CLIMATE IN GREECE.

F. ISRAEL. US NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS HAVE NEVER VISITED ISRAELI PORTS. WHILE WE BELIEVE IT MAY BE PREMATURE TO CONSIDER NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS AT THIS TIME, IF A PATTERN OF ROUTINE CONVENTIONAL POWERED WARSHIP

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VISITS TO ISRAEL IS ESTABLISHED, LIMITED NUCLEAR POWERED

WARSHIP VISITS MAY BE FEASIBLE. EMBASSY TEL AVIV COMMENTS WELCOMED.

G. ITALY. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF TUNISIA, ITALY IS THE ONLY MEDITERRANEAN LITTORAL COUNTRY WHICH CURRENTLY PERMITS NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS. THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY, HOWEVER, HAS EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT SUCH VISITS ARE NOT COVERED BY SOME FORM OF A NATO AGREEMENT. EFFORTS ARE CONTINUING TO DISSUADE THE GOVERNMENT OF ITALY OF THE NEED FOR SUCH AN AGREEMENT, WHICH WE OPPOSE FOR PRACTICAL AND POLICY REASONS, AND TO OBTAIN ITALIAN APPROVAL FOR VISITS BY THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP ON THE SAME BASIS AS NOW GOVERN NUCLEAR POWERED SUBMARINE ACCESS TO ITALIAN PORTS.

H. LEBANON. THE PRESENT INSTABILITY OF THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT PRECLUDES CONSIDERATION OF ANY US WARSHIP VISITS TO LEBANON AT THIS TIME.

I. MALTA. THE GOVERNMENT OF MALTA DOES NOT PERMIT ANY US OR SOVIET WARSHIP VISITS.

J. MOROCCO. THE FIRST VISIT OF A US NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP TO MOROCCO, WAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED MARCH 20-23, AND HOPEFULLY WILL PAVE THE WAY FOR POSSIBLE LIMITED VISITING BY SHIPS OF THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP.

K. PORTUGAL. RECENT US CONVENTIONAL POWERED WARSHIP VISITS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY CONCLUDED AS HAVE NUCLEAR POWERED ATTACK SUBMARINE VISITS. EMBASSY LISBON HAS RECOMMENDED NO FURTHER NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS UNTIL AFTER JUNE ELECTIONS. WE INTEND TO PURSUE VISITS BY SHIPS OF THE NUCLEAR TASK GROUP AFTER THE ELECTIONS.

L. SPAIN. NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP ACCESS TO SPANISH PORTS IS LIMITED TO FLEET BALLISTIC SUBMARINES AT ROTA. ATTEMPTS TO SECURE NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP ACCESS TO OTHER SPANISH PORTS WERE NOT CONCLUDED DURING THE RECENT TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO AGAIN APPROACH THE SPANISH ON THIS ISSUE UNTIL THE TREATY IS RATIFIED. EVEN
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THEN WE HAVE NO ASSURANCE THAT THE SPANISH WILL RETRACT THEIR OPPOSITION TO NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS. ACTIVE SUPPORT OF THE SPANISH NAVY FOR ACCESS TO SPANISH PORTS BY THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP WAS OBTAINED DURING ON-GOING NAVY-TO-NAVY LEVEL DISCUSSIONS.

M. TUNISIA. THE GOVERNMENT OF TUNISIA PERMITS A MAXIMUM OF 14 US WARSHIP VISITS EACH YEAR AND DOES NOT DIFFERENTIATE BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL AND NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS.

SINCE TUNISIA HAS PERMITTED NUCLEAR POWERED ATTACK SUBMARINE VISITS, WE INTEND TO PURSUE VISITS THERE BY SHIPS OF THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP.

N. TURKEY. NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS TO TURKEY WERE SUSPENDED IN 1969 DUE TO UNACCEPTABLE DEMANDS FOR LIABILITY GUARANTEES IMPOSED BY THE TURKS. THE POSSIBILITY OF RESUMING NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP VISITS TO TURKEY IS NOW BEING ADDRESSED AT THE NAVY-TO-NAVY LEVEL IN THE EXPECTATION THAT IF THESE TALKS ARE ENCOURAGING, THE ISSUE WILL BE RAISED TO THE DIPLOMATIC LEVEL. HOWEVER, WE HAVE NO ASSURANCE THAT THESE EFFORTS WILL BE

SUCCESSFUL OR THAT POSITIVE RESULTS COULD BE OBTAINED
PRIOR TO THE COMPLETION OF THE DEPLOYMENT OF THE NUCLEAR
POWERED TASK GROUP.

O. YUGOSLAVIA. US NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS HAVE NEVER
VISITED YUGOSLAV PORTS. HOWEVER, SINCE VISITS TO
YUGOSLAV PORTS THREE TIMES A YEAR ARE REGULARLY PERMITTED,
EXCEPT IN THE SUMMER MONTHS, VISITS BY SHIPS OF THE
NUCLEAR POWERED TASK GROUP MAY BE POSSIBLE.

3. IT IS APPARENT THAT AN IMMEDIATE EFFORT IS REQUIRED
IF WE ARE TO DEPLOY EFFECTIVELY THE NUCLEAR POWERED TASK
GROUP TO THE MEDITERRANEAN THIS SUMMER. LACK OF ASSURED
ACCESS FOR FLEET UNITS OF THIS NATURE LIMITS OUR ABILITY
TO SUPPORT THE PRESENCE OF US SEA POWER IN THE
MEDITERRANEAN ON A CONTINUOUS BASIS. THE US NAVY IS
INCREASINGLY CONVERTING TO NUCLEAR POWER, WITH OVER A
THIRD OF MAJOR COMBATANTS, INCLUDING MOST MODERN SHIPS
AND ALL BUT A FEW SUBMARINES, NOW BEING NUCLEAR POWERED.

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CONSEQUENTLY, ADEQUATE PORT ACCESS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN
FOR OUR NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIPS IS TO BE REGARDED AS A
HIGHLY IMPORTANT US OBJECTIVE. ACTION ADDRESSEES ARE
REQUESTED TO REASSESS NUCLEAR POWERED WARSHIP ACCESS AND
ADVISE DEPARTMENT OF ANY RECOMMENDED ACTIONS WHICH COULD BE
TAKEN TO MEET THE PORT VISIT REQUIREMENTS OF THE NUCLEAR
POWERED TASK GROUP DEPLOYMENT IN JULY. COMMENTS AND OR
RECOMMENDATIONS FROM INFORMATION ADDRESSEES ALSO WELCOME.

4. FOR MADRID. THIS PROVIDES PARTIAL RESPONSE TO
REFTEL B.

SISCO

NOTE BY OC/T: POUCHED BEIRUT.

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Message Attributes

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